

Court commitment for the mentally ill and chemically dependent
(SB 1533 by Green/S. Thompson)

DIGEST: SB 1533 would have designated the Texas Commission on Alcohol and Drug Abuse as the state agency to receive and administer federal funds for chemical dependency treatment programs. The commission would have received, controlled, and distributed all federal public funds for alcohol and substance abuse and chemical dependency programs in the state. The bill also would have made various changes concerning court commitment procedures for the chemically dependent and mentally ill. The areas covered by the bill include emergency detention and precommitment procedures, confidentiality, and court-ordered treatment.

GOVERNOR'S
REASON
FOR VETO:

While the portions of the bill relating to court commitment procedures make needed changes and are a good piece of legislation, the bill would remove the Governor's Office from its current role of administering federal funds for alcohol and substance abuse and chemical dependency services in Texas and transfer this authority to the Texas Commission on Alcohol and Drug Abuse.

RESPONSE:

Sen. Gene Green, the author of SB 1533, said, "I am surprised that the governor picked the relatively small issue of control over federal funding as a reason to veto a very good and necessary bill which would have provided a great deal of assistance to mentally ill and chemically dependent persons."

NOTES:

SB 1533 passed the House on the Consent Calendar and was not analyzed in a Daily Floor Report.

During the first called session, the Legislature enacted SB 57 by Green, a bill similar to SB 1533, changing the commitment procedures for chemically dependent persons to conform to those for mentally ill persons. SB 57 did not include a provision transferring administration of federal funds for alcohol and substance abuse from the Governor's Office to the Texas Commission on Alcohol and Drug Abuse. The House Research Organization analysis of SB 57 appeared in the July 14, 1989 Daily Floor Report.